

Date: 1988

Author: The Fetzer Foundation Inc.

Category: Books about John

This is the official Fetzer Institute pamphlet for the Fetzer Hall of Records during its years of existence inside the Institute Administration Building from 1988-1995.

the hall of records



The Hall of Records in the Fetzer Foundation's administration building was designed as a tribute to eight individuals who John Fetzer believes helped nurture and bring humanity forward to a new level of awareness and potential. The room also provides a public space within the building for contemplation and reflection, in keeping with the Foundation's mission of supporting the growth and well-being of the whole person.

The busts represent, from left to right as you face them, Socrates, Ramses II of Egypt, Francis I of France,

Joseph of Arimathea, Louis XIV of France, St. John of the Cross, Henry II of England, and Thomas Jefferson.

They were all chosen for the Hall of Records by Fetzer, the Foundation's founder, because his own professional and personal growth was strongly influenced by studying these historical figures and their accomplishments. He also came to see them as positive symbols of certain events and elements in history that were building blocks for humanity's advancement.

As you enter the Hall of Records from the lobby, you walk through brass gates set between two pillars, an architectural feature similar to the entrance of many temples and churches. It is a physical reminder that here you have the opportunity to enter into a quiet space apart from your everyday life. The inverted triangles in the gates represent part of the Foundation's logo.

Over the doorway is a sculpture in three-dimensional stained glass created especially for this room by Dawn Douet of Austin, Texas. Although it was deliberately left abstract to excite the viewer's imagination, the central themes for the piece were

found in the electro-magnetic energies of the sun and the moment of Creation. Douet used a brass frame and rods, resin, and stained glass to achieve the colorful, three-dimensional design. The center of the sculpture is a single piece of red slag glass symbolizing the sun's core.

The room itself is patterned after the architecture of Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia. The half-dome ceiling is covered in gold leaf, symbolizing the value and purity of true wisdom. The eight bronze busts are arranged in a semicircle on individual black granite pedestals.

The busts were designed and created by Kalamazoo

artist, Kirk Newman. Each piece was carefully crafted to represent not only the individual man, but also the basic sculptural style in vogue at the time that person was alive. Thus, the room is a small museum of sculptural art history.

Symbolic elements from the Hall of Records can be found in other places in the Foundation building, which is located overlooking Dustin Lake just west of Kalamazoo, Michigan. For example, the solar disk carved over the front entrance is an ancient Egyptian symbol of the soul. The addition of wings symbolizes the soul's flight back to God. This solar disk motif repeats, in a more

modern version, in the Douet sculpture over the gates to the Hall. And it is interesting to note that four of these men — Francis I, Thomas Jefferson, Louis XIV, and Ramses II — used the sun or solar disk as an important symbol in their lives.

In a conversation with John Fetzer, he recounted the origins of his concept for the Hall of Records.

"Originally these individuals were not chosen for the specific purpose of being collected and put into a gallery. But each had a strong impact on my life at one time or another. So when we began to design a building for the Foundation's headquarters, it occurred to

me that perhaps we should have a place within it to show the types of philosophies that have influenced me and brought the essence of the Foundation into being. If you were to ask me, 'Who are the people in history who have made the deepest impression on your life?', I would name the eight in the Hall of Records."

"I also think each of these people had an enormous influence on others," he continued. "At the Foundation we are searching for ways to bring balance and healing to this very troubled world — a balance among the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of humanity. And if you carefully study

the lives of these people, you will see they were also searching for balance, each of them working toward it in his own way.

So this room is a physical reminder that we are not the first, that the search for growth and well-being has been going on throughout history."

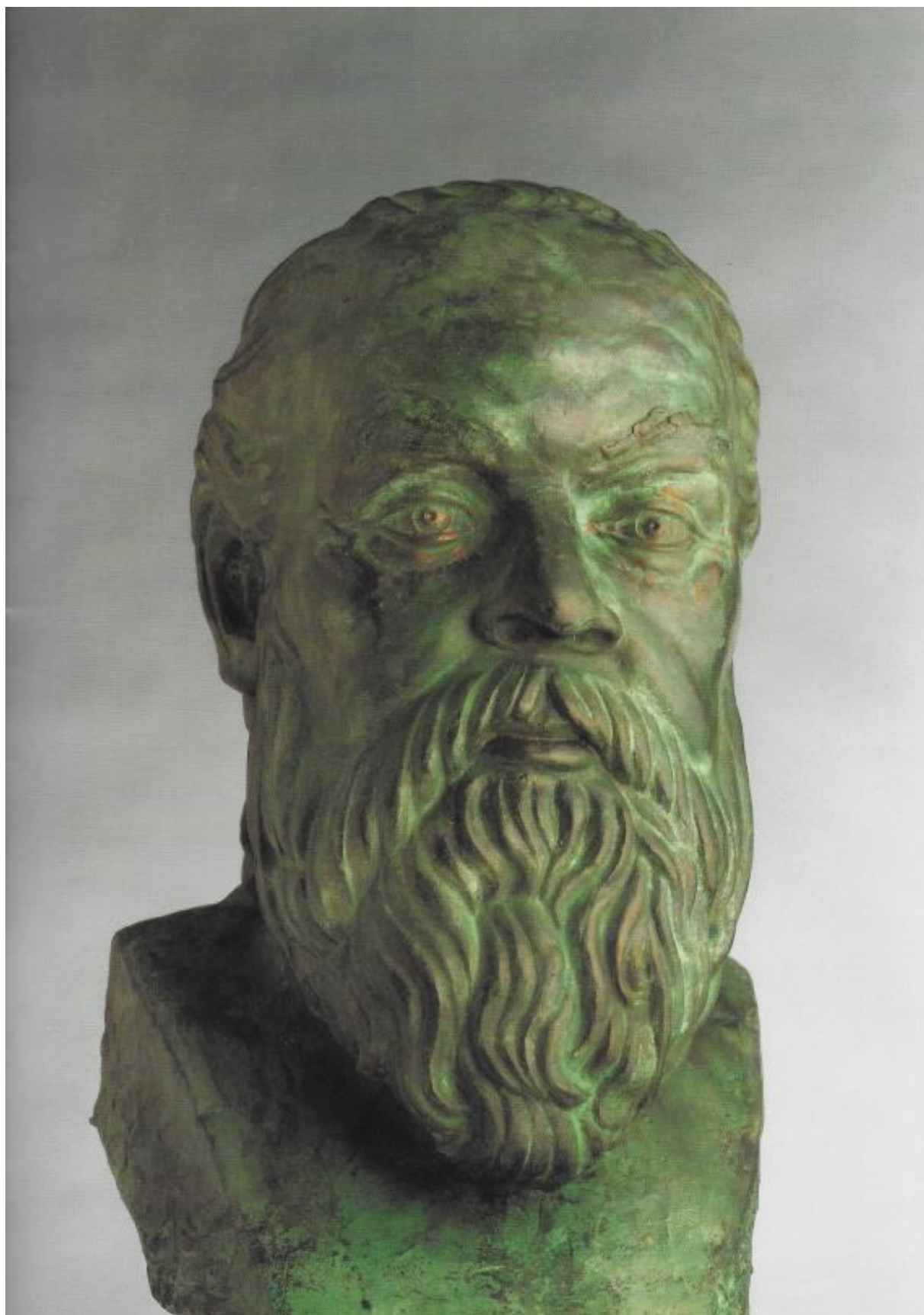
"If we have done the Hall of Records correctly, it should capture some of the essence of these seekers, what they went through, and what they contributed to the world. I hope seeing the room will, in some small way, encourage others to take more responsibility in their own personal search for balanced, full, productive lives." ■



An early Greek philosopher and moralist, Socrates is believed to have lived from 470-399 B.C. He is probably best known as a teacher, using his keen intellect to explore logical thought, the proper method for philosophical discussions, and the nature of civic duty with his pupils and fellow Athenians. Socrates laid significant groundwork for what finally blossomed into the Western scientific tradition by his insistence on a rigorous examination of ideas and assumptions about reality.

Less well known is Socrates' spiritual nature. There was a distinctly mystical bent to some of his teachings as he encouraged people to take care of their inner lives and souls while living in the world. He was a man of firm convictions, and the story is well known of his execution by drinking poison hemlock after being convicted by a local jury on charges of atheism and corrupting the young.

Socrates left no writings of his own so all information about him is from secondary sources, especially the dialogues of Plato. Socrates was included in the Hall of Records to represent what is the finest in human mental processes. His own life was an example of what logic, careful thought, and rigorous honesty can do to further the enlightenment of the individual.



F

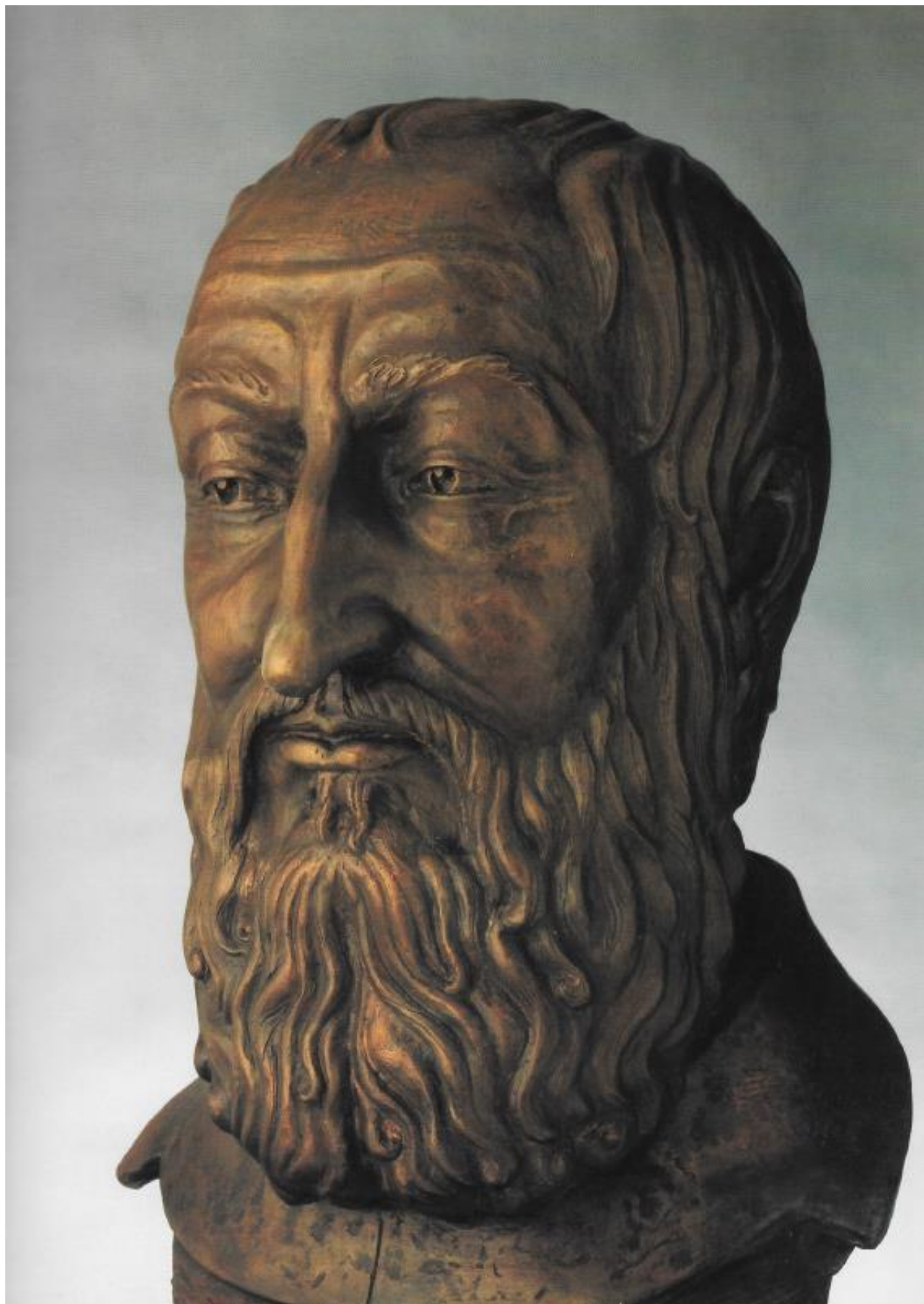
Francis I came to the throne of France in 1515 A.D. at the age of 21. Before his death in 1547 he brought about many fundamental changes in France's political and social structure, its economy, and the country's religious and cultural life.

Francis had no qualms about breaking treaties to suit his purposes. He was at war for much of his life, especially with the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V and England's Henry VIII. But he was chosen for the Hall of Records for his gentler side, as shown by his incredible contributions to European culture and knowledge.

Francis I presided over the Renaissance and Reformation in France. As one of the greatest patrons of arts and letters to sit on the French throne, he eagerly supported cultural innovation. A skilled architect, Francis ordered the building of many beautiful French castles and manor houses, including Fontainebleau.

Francis I formed the nucleus of the current collection at the Louvre with pieces commandeered during France's wars in Italy. He was also an avid collector of rare manuscripts and organized the first authentic book collection for the French kings' library. Francis welcomed printers, scholars, poets, and musicians from all over Europe to his court and nurtured their talents. He is known for supporting Leonardo de Vinci during the last years of the great artist-engineer's life.

FRANCIS I





ouis XIV, a member of the Bourbon dynasty, was king of France from 1643-1715 A.D. A historical dichotomy, he is lashed by some scholars for his despotic, warmongering, extravagant side, and praised by others for his cultural contributions as "the Sun King." However, both factions agree that he was a powerful, controversial figure.

Louis was a child when his father died, so the beginning of his long reign was under the power of a Papal ambassador, Cardinal Mazarin. Louis finally took over as ruler when the Cardinal died in 1661.

Louis XIV brought the concept of absolute monarchy based on the divine right of kings to its ultimate expression. He centralized political authority in an unprecedented manner, forced the nobility into financial dependence on the crown, and fought war after war for European territories. His reign began in growth and glory, and ended with France militarily weak, in debt, and well on its way to revolution.

However, the Hall of Records bust honors the glorious, constructive side of Louis XIV's dominion and personality – Louis as the Sun King. As creator of the palace at Versailles, his interests peaked in culture, the visual arts, literature, architecture, music, and formal gardens. His bust also stands as a reminder that human beings have both a dark and light side, and that each contributes a dynamic part to life.

LOUIS XIV





ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

Born Juan de Yepes y Alvarez in Spain in 1542 A.D., the man we now call St. John of the Cross was one of the greatest mystics in the annals of Christianity. He was a founder of the men's order of the Discalced (reformed) Carmelites and the close friend, confidant, and confessor of St. Theresa of Avila. As a great lyric poet, he created some of the most beautiful verse ever written in Spanish.

John of the Cross, the mystic, devoted most of his life to contemplation and the search for spiritual truth. But he was also involved enough in earthly church politics to be thrown into prison. He was a reformer, promoting discipline and simplicity in worldly matters, and sought to change the relatively easy life of the rival Calced Carmelite order. The antagonism between the two factions grew so fierce that John was kidnapped by the Calced order and imprisoned at Toledo for nine months before escaping in 1578. He continued to serve the Discalced order until his death in 1591, and was canonized by Pope Benedict XIII in 1726.

St. John of the Cross is included in the Hall of Records in recognition of his total commitment to spiritual development and his struggle to transcend the physical plane. His writings, such as *The Dark Night of the Soul*, are among the classics in religious literature. He is an inspiring example of what individuals can attain if they devote their lives to seeking the Infinite.

H

enry II, Duke of Normandy, lived from 1133-1189 A.D., reigning as England's king from 1154 until his death. He founded the Plantagenet royal line.

HENRY II

Henry II was intelligent, a superb leader in combat, and willful to a fault. In popular history Henry is remembered for his conflict with Thomas a Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, over the authority of state and church courts. In legend Henry II is credited with financing excavations at Glastonbury, seeking to discover what reality might lie behind stories about Camelot, the Holy Grail, and King Arthur's burial.

However, Henry II is in the Hall of Records for quite a different reason. He was the first English monarch to use management techniques in running his kingdom. At the beginning of his reign, he was able to bring law, order, and organization to his various holdings by the sheer strength of his personality. As time passed, he reconstructed the feudal government by strengthening the royal courts and using royalty as a tool for centralized administration.

Henry was uniquely able to convert royal authority to military power at will, yet he was one of the first rulers who used efficient management to enhance his wealth rather than plunder. Henry II is credited with establishing the foundation for what became English Common Law, and is still recognized as one of the great rulers who made good government virtually synonymous with efficient management.





THOMAS JEFFERSON

Thomas Jefferson, born in Virginia in 1743, was an architect of the American Revolution and through 40 years of service to his country became a champion of political and spiritual freedom for all. He was the primary author of the United States *Declaration of Independence*, a document shown by time to be one of the greatest written expressions of freedom in history.

Jefferson was a shaper of history – a man of his times who wanted a better future. He was a lawyer, farmer, draftsman, and inventor; the governor of Virginia; U.S. ambassador to France; and the third president of the United States. Elected in 1801, the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 proved to be the most notable achievement of Jefferson's eight-year presidency.

However, a bust of Jefferson does not sit in the Hall of Records for these achievements. Rather, he is honored for his ability to bring fundamental spiritual principles into living political reality. He was a deeply religious man who desperately wanted the ideals of freedom, justice, and equality to become more than words on paper. Until his death in 1826, Jefferson was a man on a continual search for personal and public balance and fairness. He saw America as a potential revolution in consciousness as well as an experimental model in methods of governing people. Few others have so totally devoted their lives to making such an ideal a living reality.

The creation process: An interview with Kirk Newman

Kirk, how did you become involved with this project?

One of the building's contractors told me the Foundation was looking for someone who could do fairly realistic work. Since I also have a philosophical interest in these people, it seemed very timely and something that would really be delightful to do. To me it was more than just making surface representations of eight historical figures. It was an opportunity to creatively become involved in what they really thought, and to give some unique expression to these heads through my ability.

It turned out to be a very creative and exciting challenge because it dealt on a plane that was not just sculpture. For me, it was an intellectual and intuitive connection to much of history. It's difficult to explain, but the process gets outside of logic in a certain

sense and has a logic of its own—that greater logic we're all contained within.

Did you sense a common link among all these figures?

I sensed the influence of something—I guess we'll call it God—that was in all these people. As I studied their lives and worked on the heads, I saw a force working through them, manifesting in various ways, that has led many others to something new. I think these eight men are all linked in that manner, especially those who really became concerned with the condition of the soul and what it is—Socrates and St. John of the Cross.

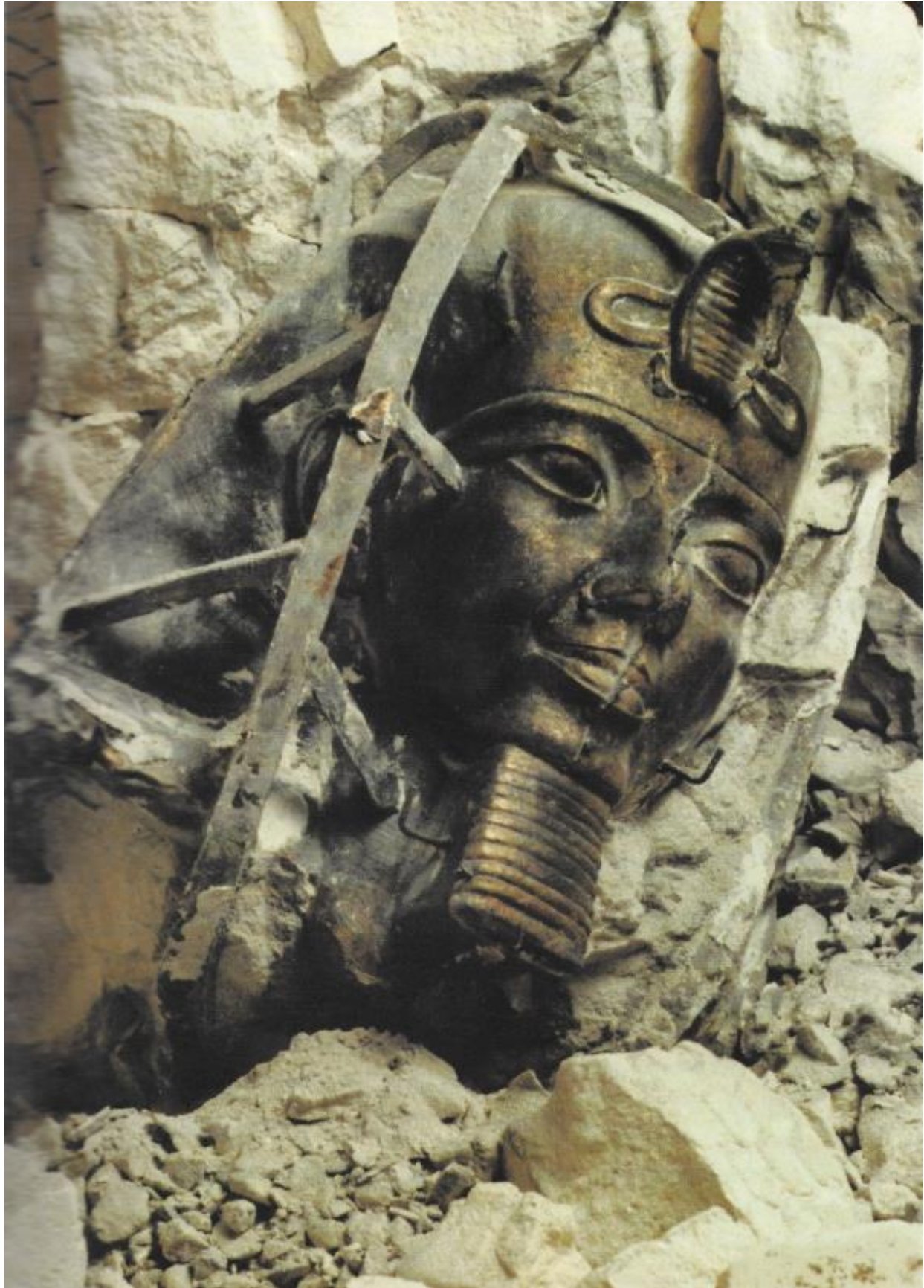
Do you have a favorite?

Actually, I loved each one as I did it. The Ramses head, I felt, would be the most difficult. Having looked at them all, I thought Ramses was the least accessible because he came

from one of the oldest periods and I knew little about him. Since the Egyptians dealt so much with the afterlife, I think they also created the greatest sculpture in the world in terms of spirit as form. So, Ramses was the first piece I did, probably the most sculptural in terms of form, and not as literal as some of the other heads. I've been fascinated with Socrates a long time, and St. John of the Cross was especially interesting. But, really, I just took each one as they came.

What makes great sculpture or great art to you?

Well, the mystery of a great portrait is very difficult to define. But I know if it's there. There are a lot of works in museums, but I question how much of it is art. It was very presumptuous of me to think that I could make all of these



encourage you to find out what these people are all about. I hope the effect is that it stimulates people to learn more.

I think the room can be instructive in this way for years to come. For example, how often do you really get to see a portrait of Socrates? It's difficult to find a portrait of him. There is enough authenticity in these busts from my studies so it should be very educational.

What do you think will happen to these pieces over a long period of time as more people view them?

It seems to me that, over time, as people see and experience and perhaps even touch the heads, somehow the pieces may start absorbing little bits of

energy from all those who see them. Although you may not see a structural change – bronze is a material that's relatively solid – that energy is going to keep imprinting on these pieces and they're going to change at some very subtle level as time goes on. It's amazing what happens to religious art in churches. It seems to have a different quality than art found in museums, and I think it's because it's approached with a stronger spirit.

I remember going into a church in Rome, and the foot of one of the figures was partially wiped away because people had touched it and kissed it so many times. Over many years this had actually physically taken some of the material away. Also, because bronzes all have a patina on them, the surface of the patina is affected by its environment.

So it begins to take on a quality over time, and develops that mysterious veil of antiquity that carries the spirit.

What would you like people to feel after they have been in the Hall of Records?

I would be very satisfied if some people could sense the spiritual content of the whole group. I'm using the word "spiritual" loosely here, but I mean an experience like when you hear beautiful music that gives you a chill or when you read a passage from a great piece of literature. There's a connection that runs through that kind of communication. It's rare, but that's the province of art.

Credits

Graphic Design, Typesetting & Art Production
Eddy Graphic Design / Richard

Author & Production Coordination
Jan Andersen / Kalamazoo

Cover Art
Clifford L. Kessler / Kalamazoo

Sculpture Photography
Arcadia Photographics / Kalamazoo

Artistic Process Photography
Spectrum Multi-Media Production Group / Kalamazoo

Cover Photography
John Güler Photography / Kalamazoo

Color Separation
MCP / Battle Creek

Printing & Binding
Lawson Printers / Battle Creek